



SB23-177

SHORT TITLE: 2023 Colorado Water Conservation Board Water Projects Appropriations

LONG TITLE: Concerning the funding of Colorado water conservation board projects, and, in connection therewith, making an appropriation.

SPONSORS: Senators Roberts and Simpson

COMMITTEES: Senate Agriculture & Natural Resources

PURPOSE OF THE BILL: To present a list of projects for legislative approval and authorize funding for water projects. The bill appropriates a total of \$90,430,000 from the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) Construction Fund in the Department of Natural Resources to the CWCB and the Division of Water Resources for specified water-related projects. On July 1, 2023, the bill transfers \$54.0 million from the Severance Tax Perpetual Base Fund to the CWCB Construction Fund, and \$6.0 million from the unreserved cash in the CWCB Construction Fund to various other cash funds.

PROPONENTS OF THE BILL: Colorado Water Conservation Board

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS: Water providers and users, water treatment facilities, local governments including special districts,

BACKGROUND: The CWCB offers loans and grants for eligible entities in Colorado. Most of the funding appropriations for the CWCB comes from the CWCB Construction Fund (referred to as "Cash Funds"). This money is appropriated each year through authorizing legislation referred to as the "Projects bill". Money repaid from loans is rolled over to provide new funding support.

Is this bill necessary this year? Yes. CWCB provides financial assistance to water providers and other eligible entities in Colorado through loans and grants for a variety of water-related projects, studies. Each year, the CWCB presents a list of eligible projects for legislative approval and appropriation of funds to carry out its mission.

How does the bill change current law? The bill appropriates the following amounts for the 2023-24 state fiscal year from the Colorado water conservation board (CWCB) construction fund to the CWCB or the division of water resources in the department of natural resources for the following projects:

- Continuation of the satellite monitoring system, \$380,000. (Section 1 of the bill);
- Continuation of the floodplain map modernization program, \$500,000 (section 2).
- Continuation of the weather modification permitting program, \$500,000 (section 3).
- Continuation of the watershed restoration program, \$500,000 (section 6).
- Continuation of the Colorado Mesonet project, \$150,000 (section 7).
- Continuation of the weather forecasting partnership project, \$1,000,000 (section 8).
- Support for the division of water resources mobile field data collection application project, \$800,000 (section 9).
- Continuation of the reservoir enlargement assessment project, \$1,000,000 (section 11).
- Support for the central Colorado water conservancy district augmentation efficiency project, \$3,000,000 (section 15).

- Support for the state water plan action advancement project, \$2,000,000 (section 16).

The bill directs the state treasurer to transfer the following amounts on July 1, 2023, from the severance tax perpetual base fund to the CWCB construction fund, and appropriates those amounts from the CWCB construction fund to the CWCB for the following projects:

- Continuation of the Platte River recovery implementation program, \$19,000,000 (section 12);
- Support for the upper Colorado river endangered fish recovery program and the San Juan River basin recovery implementation program, \$15,000,000 (section 13); and
- Additional and continued support for the Frying Pan - Arkansas project, \$20,000,000 (section 14).

The bill directs the state treasurer to transfer the following amounts from the CWCB construction fund on July 1, 2023:

- \$2,000,000 to restore the fish and wildlife resources fund (section 4);
- Up to \$2,000,000 to the CWCB litigation fund (section 5); and \$2,000,000 to the water plan implementation cash fund for continuation of the water plan implementation grant program (section 10).

Section 17 appropriates \$10,600,000 of sports betting revenues from the water plan implementation cash fund and \$2,000,000 from the CWCB construction fund to the CWCB to fund grants that will help implement the state water plan.

Section 18 appropriates \$8,000,000 from the wildlife cash fund to -2- SB23-177 the division of parks and wildlife to purchase up to 924 acre-feet of orphan shares from the CWCB as part of the Chatfield reservoir reallocation project.

Does the bill affect the prior appropriations system? No.

How is the bill implemented? After the bill is signed into law, the named projects can receive funding as it is appropriated and becomes available.

Practical Considerations: N/A.

Fiscal Impact: For FY 2023-24, the bill includes appropriations totaling \$90,430,000. Collectively, \$84,430,000 is appropriated from the Colorado Water Conservation Board Construction Fund, Wildlife Cash Fund, and Water Plan Implementation Cash Fund to the Department of Natural Resources, and \$6.0 million is available from three continuously appropriated cash funds.